

affirmation



Ontario
Human Rights
Commission

Volume 3, Number 3,
September 1982

Published by The Ontario Human
Rights Commission

We can change our children's racial attitudes

by M. Ahmed Ijaz and I. Helene Ijaz

Few attempts have been made in the past to improve racial attitudes in our society by starting at the roots — with children in our elementary schools. It is often assumed that children 'naturally' have positive interethnic attitudes, that they readily mix with children of other races and cultures and that they tend to get along well with one another. Even when racial prejudice in school children manifests itself in name-calling and the occasional act of violence, it is often dismissed as merely 'kids' squabbling'. Research shows that, indeed, racial prejudice can exist at an early age. The foundations of ethnic attitudes are laid in early childhood. Children are aware of race at about three years of age; that awareness increases rapidly during the following years, and it is essentially shaped by the time children enter first grade (Proshansky, 1966).

Ethnic attitudes are shaped mainly through socialization. Children's ethnic attitudes may be acquired through the straight transmission of values from adults, older siblings, peers, all those around them. These attitudes may be based on the direct observation of interracial events that cast the members of an ethnic group in a negative light or they may develop through the subtle and unconscious assimilation of the values

prevailing in their social and cultural environment. On the other hand, the ethnic attitudes of youngsters remain pliable to some extent and can be changed under certain circumstances.

Can racial attitudes be changed and if so, how? Can we effectively teach tolerance and acceptance of other races and cultures and thereby improve our students' ethnic attitudes?

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photo: Claudio Lewis

Discrimination and the economy

by Jill Armstrong

Although there is a tendency to view prejudice and discrimination as personality processes, or even precipitous outbursts, they do not occur in a vacuum. They are products of economic, political and historical situations, and are the culmination of a long and complex process of experience.

Racial and ethnic groups do not, in themselves, constitute economic classes. In some respects they function as status groups, which attempt to achieve social esteem and economic well-being. White Europeans have commanded status, on the basis of

colour alone, in nearly every racially mixed western society.

Historically, observers have documented increases in intolerance of minorities during periods of economic insecurity, and the past several years in Canada are no exception. What is the link between a rise in negative economic indicators and discriminatory conduct?

Although racial privilege and disadvantage pervade all institutions, they are expressed most strategically in the labour market and the structure

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Cause for celebration

June 15, 1982 marked a very special event in the history of human rights in Ontario. For that day marked not only the 20th Anniversary of the Ontario Human Rights Code, but also the proclamation of the new Code, with its broadened mandate of protection for the people of Ontario.

As part of the dual celebration for Ontario Human Rights Week, June 14 - 18, a dinner was held at the Harbour Castle Convention Centre on June 16, and was co-sponsored by the Premier of Ontario — The Honourable William G. Davis and the Chairman of the Ontario Human

Rights Commission — Canon Borden C. Purcell.

The dinner was an opportunity to gather together and thank the people who symbolize the Province's and its peoples' dedication to the advancement of human rights over the 20

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photo: Claudio Lewis

Premier William G. Davis spends a relaxed moment with guests following the celebration dinner to launch the new Human Rights Code.

The future is ours to build

Excerpts from an address delivered June 16, 1982, launching the New Code

by the Honourable William G. Davis
Premier of Ontario

The proclamation of our new *Human Rights Code*, and the proclamation by Her Majesty the Queen of our new Constitution and the Charter of Rights within it, makes 1982 not only a year of history but a year of significant progress.

It is hard to find hopeful signs these days, even for an unrepentant opti-

mist like myself. But when there are positive signs, when there are achievements that offer encouragement and opportunity for more people, when there are breakthroughs and significant steps forward, I think we have a duty not only to point them out, but to cherish them and build upon them.

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We can change
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Empirical evidence of the effect of instruction on the development of positive ethnic attitudes is conflicting and inconclusive. Some researchers noted very little effect on the ethnic attitudes of eighth-grade students as a result of academic instruction about prejudice. In a similar study with high school seniors, others noted an increase in prejudice, found the use of movies ineffective in a course with high school students, and, further, that information about Jews decreased anti-Semitism only when this information was linked with a direct discussion about anti-Semitism.

By contrast, instructional programs that focused on cultural similarities have been found to be more successful in promoting positive intergroup attitudes. In a study with second-grade white Midwestern children in the United States with little previous exposure to blacks, it was found that the use of a multi-ethnic reader that contained interracial stories brought about more favourable attitudes towards blacks.

An emphasis on intercultural similarities may encourage desirable interethnic attitudes because the perception of similarity is likely to produce associations of goodness and acceptability, whereas being different is frequently associated with being bad. Such associations appear to derive from a need for psychological consistency and balance. On the other hand, in cross-cultural comparisons, differences tend to be focused on more than similarities because the human conceptual system perceives contrasts as being more salient than similarities. Consequently, informative reporting about the lifestyles, customs, traditions and behavioural patterns of members of another culture will often, unintentionally, highlight the differences rather than the similarities of cultures. The perception of such differences, however, is likely to foster prejudice rather than tolerance and acceptance. Differences are believed to create dissonance and are therefore associated with badness.

It is not clear what instructional methods are most suitable for accentuating intercultural similarities and what strategies may be most effective in promoting positive interethnic attitudes with elementary school children. It has been shown that knowledge and understanding do not, by necessity, reduce prejudice. If desirable attitudes are to be developed, a person must combine a knowledge of the norms and values of the target culture with the acknowledgment that these norms are as important as one's own culture.

In several studies, role playing has been found to be successful as a strategy for reducing racial prejudice. On the other hand, vicarious identification with a person of another culture in a situation typical to that culture may represent a highly sensitive means of apprehending differential social and moral norms and behavioural patterns. The effective acting out of the role of a person from another culture, in an environment particular to that culture, requires not only role-reasoning skill, but also empathy for that person. It involves sensing and expressing that person's feelings and thoughts in the given situation and determining appropriate actions based on these perceptions. In other words, role playing addresses a person's attitudes, not

only through rational channels, but also through emotional and affective channels.

With elementary-school children, such a multi-dimensional approach to the development of positive interethnic attitudes is likely to be more successful than a purely rationalistic approach. In children, the most fruitful learning experiences occur through doing and experiencing things themselves. Playing the role of a person of another culture in a situation typical to that culture provides not only an opportunity for the students to learn about the other culture, but also to learn why people do things differently and to appreciate the values inherent in other people's ways of doing things.

A program providing such experiences was introduced into the social studies curriculum of some of the classes that had participated in the above described attitudinal study on racial attitudes. It provided an apprenticeship in East Indian living rather than academic instruction about life in South East Asia. By focusing on similarities between cultures, the program succeeded in creating a greater acceptance of the cultural differences that so often cause ethnic prejudice. By acting out the roles of members of the East Indian culture in a variety of situations, the students could understand and empathize with their actions and ways of living. Finally, the notion of foreignness and strangeness the children may have associated with East Indian behavioural patterns, customs and traditions may have become effaced by comparing them to conduct in North America and other parts of the world in similar situations.

More such multi-cultural programs need to be introduced into our schools. Mere information programs about other cultures are not enough; such programs often stress inter-cultural differences rather than similarities by focusing on picturesque and bizarre aspects of the target culture. Multi-cultural programs in our schools and in society at large need to be structured around cross-cultural similarities and the roots of cultural diversity if they are to develop a feeling of shared identity among all members of our multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society.

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Cause for celebration
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years since the enactment of the first Code.

The distinguished guests included members of the legislature, the current staff of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, past commissioners, selected members of the media and representatives of a large number of advocacy groups. Particular tribute was paid to those individuals who have given outstanding service in human rights advocacy and protection, and who continue in their efforts to establish a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of each individual.

Toronto East regional office open house

by Colm Caffrey

On June 17, 1982, as part of the 20th Anniversary celebrations of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the Honourable Russell H. Ramsay, Minister of Labour and Canon Borden Purcell, Chairman of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, jointly performed the ribbon-cutting ceremony, officially opening the Toronto East regional office at 2500 Lawrence Avenue East in Scarborough.

In their remarks, both the minister and the chairman reinforced the concept of decentralization as a means of providing better public access to government services, and both had encouraging and supportive words for the staff.

The Toronto East office serves the geographic area from Yonge Street east to Trenton and north to Huntsville.

The Honourable George Ashe, Minister of Revenue attended and wished the staff every success in the future. Also in attendance were Commissioners Bev Salmon and Marie Marchand who were most enthusiastic about the facilities in Scarborough. The managers from all Ministry of Labour agencies briefly outlined the services they provide at the same location.

A large and supportive delegation was present from the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force, including several Community Relations Officers. Others included Controller Ken Morrish — Borough of Scarborough, Mr. Mel Catre — Canadian Filipino Association, P. Croxford — Canada Employment Centre, D. J. MacDonald — Ontario Federation of Labour, J.M. Rajan — Indian Immigrant Aid Society, Michael Carroll — ARC Industries, Regional Councillor Doug Dickson (Durham),



Photo: Jackie Dunt

The Hon. Russell H. Ramsay, Minister of Labour (left) and Canon Borden C. Purcell, chairman of the Ontario Human Rights Commission officially open the Toronto East regional office.

Harry Beatty — Ontario Association for the Mentally Retarded, and many other community leaders.

The East Region staff would like to express their appreciation to all their colleagues and friends who shared in the celebration.

Colm Caffrey is supervisor of the Toronto East regional office — O.H.R.C.

Racial name calling and verbal harassment as discrimination

Prof. Peter A. Cumming, appointed a board of inquiry in the complaint of Mr. Sucha Singh Dhillon alleging discrimination in employment by F.W. Woolworth Company Ltd., handed down an important decision that defined an employee's right to enjoy working conditions free of a discriminatory atmosphere.

The old Code provided that no person should 'discriminate against any employee with regard to any term or condition of employment, because of race . . . of such person or employee.'

Prof. Cumming then analysed legal precedence on this issue both in Canada and the United States and concluded that verbal harassment did indeed fall under the purview of the Code.

Two paragraphs in the new Code (formerly Bill 7) deal specifically with this matter. Section 4(2) states 'every person who is an employee has a right to freedom from harassment in the workplace by the employer or agent of the employer or by any other employee because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, age, record of offences, marital status, family status or handicap.'

Harassment is defined in section 9(f) in the following manner:

Harassment means engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.'

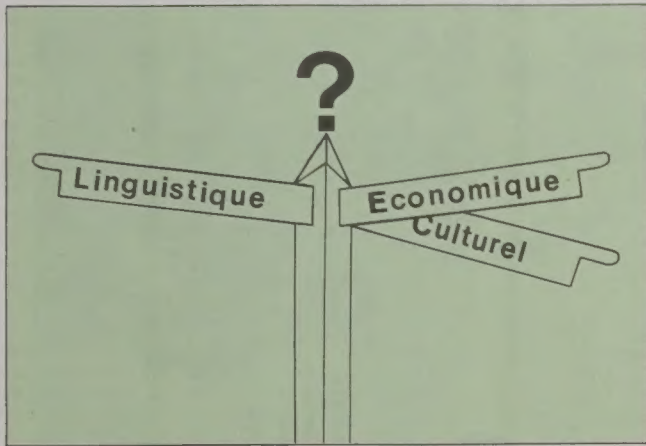
'There can be no doubt,' Prof. Cumming comments, 'that once Bill 7 is proclaimed and has the force of law, employees have a right to a workplace free from harassment and that harassment includes verbal abuse based on prohibited grounds.'

Does the employer have responsibility in such a case? Says Prof. Cumming in his decision: 'There is a duty on an employer to take reasonable steps to eradicate this form of discrimination, and if the employer does not, he is liable under the Code.'

It may be said that Prof. Cumming's historical review of the issue shows how boards of inquiry developed the concept 'term or condition of employment' under the old Code, and this broadened interpretation has now become explicitly part of the new Code.

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L'avenir des Franco-Ontariens — De la folklorisation au développement économique.



par Michel Dupuis

Il n'est pas facile de dire la vérité mais on aurait tort de la camoufler, à plus forte raison lorsqu'il s'agit de l'avenir des Franco-Ontariens. Sommes-nous à la croisée des chemins?

Selon nos historiens, les franco-phones de cette province ont défendu avec acharnement et maintenu par des tiraillements politiques incessants leurs 'privilèges' linguistiques et culturels. D'expérience en expérience, nous avons évolué, nous avons développé une certaine expertise.

Ce qui ressort assez nettement c'est que les Franco-Ontariens continuent à lutter au niveau linguistique et culturel. Il va sans dire que les progrès réalisés dans ces secteurs sont appréciables mais notre enlèvement dans le maquis des activités culturelles et la volonté de faire de notre langue le seul terrain de nos luttes, nous condamnent à ne livrer trop souvent que des combats symboliques. Nous retrouvons dans ces luttes les mêmes rengaines sur l'éducation et aussi les mêmes velléités à droite et à gauche, plus souvent à droite d'ailleurs.

Ce serait une leurre déplorable que de baser notre avenir uniquement dans ces secteurs traditionnels: langue, culture et éducation. En effet, un élément déterminant et décisif de notre développement nous manque: l'économique.

C'est donc dire que plusieurs changements s'imposent. Il faut repenser et redéfinir nos moyens et nos champs d'action afin de se doter d'une nouvelle formule de développement, tant au niveau de l'individu qu'au niveau de la collectivité. Il faut parfois démolir le temple pour le reconstruire.

C'est à nous seuls qu'il appartient de faire le choix entre les différentes possibilités qui nous sont offertes. Refuser de poser ces questions ou laisser au hasard le soin d'y répondre serait plus néfaste que de se cramponner à l'illusion d'un quelconque statu quo.

Plusieurs témoignages confirment qu'il est d'une importance primordiale que les Franco-Ontariens se lancent à la recherche d'un pouvoir économique et ce, par le truchement de coopératives économiques. Ce secteur nous a toujours fait grande-

ment défaut et constitue encore une de nos principales pierres d'achoppement.

Toutefois, certains pourraient croire qu'il devient suranné de parler de coopératisme économique ou qu'il s'agit là d'un domaine ou la théorie l'emporte de loin sur la réalité. Il n'en est rien. Les coopératives ont à leur crédit des réalisations et des succès qui n'ont guère raison d'être démontrés.

Au lieu de placer nos espoirs sur la dépendance économique, en fondant nous-mêmes nos propres entreprises, nous évitons de nous laisser aller à une attitude défensive et de nous laisser glisser dans une croisade où les chemins ne mènent nulle part.

L'avenir du Franco-Ontarien dépend de son aptitude à développer une solidarité. Il est donc essentiel d'instaurer des équipes de travail en commun, de fonder de véritables foyers d'intégration. Les coopératives économiques nous permettent de réaliser les deux.

Commandant les différents secteurs de l'activité humaine, les coopératives nous offrent un puissant levier économique et soulèvent de grandes espérances. C'est une formule d'autodétermination économique et un instrument de restauration sociale.

Allons-nous choisir la voie du développement économique ou allons-nous conserver notre mentalité servile de minoritaire? A vous de choisir.

Article extrait de la publication *Des Gens et des Sous* (dossier d'information sur le mouvement coopératif des régions du Nipissing et de Sudbury).

New commissioner

The Ontario Human Rights Commission welcomes the appointment of Ms. Sam Ion who comes to the commission with a long history of equal opportunity advocacy, media and public relations.

A member of the boards of numerous community and social service agencies, she is currently a columnist and feature writer for the Toronto Sun.

The future is ours
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As we reflect upon the human rights challenge in our own province and the need to ensure greater equality in the future, we must begin from a position where there is no room for complacency, no room for smugness, no room for self-satisfaction.

Whatever our progress to date, however well we have done in comparison to other jurisdictions, there remains more to be done, new problems to be faced, further opportunities to be protected.

I ask you to compare the Ontario today with the Ontario that existed when the *Human Rights Code* was first created. I ask you to compare the changing makeup of our communities, of our student population, of our work force.

Today's Ontario, while rooted in a magnificent history that goes back hundreds of years to the original French, English, Scottish and Irish settlers, and before that to the heritage of our native people, embraces a reality that is multi-faceted, multi-coloured, multi-racial and multi-cultural.

We want this province to be a meritocracy. We want people of achievement and ability and skill, people who are prepared to work hard, to have no limits set upon their potential within our society.

Youth Employment Program doubles for 1982

The end of August 1982 saw the successful completion of the second Youth Employment Program of the Race Relations Division. What had begun as a modest idea in 1980 to meet the particular needs of unemployed young people had grown from 38 summer jobs for youth in 1981 to 100 jobs in 1982, and from jobs in the downtown area to jobs both downtown and in the area of Jane-Finch. This summer, 100 young people worked for eight weeks from July 5 to August 27 in a variety of job settings, including manufacturing, retailing, service agencies, policing, camping and offices.

The original idea for this project came in 1980 from discussions by division staff with downtown community leaders. We were further encouraged by the executive of the Downtown Business Council, who agreed to use their membership lists to find placements for novice workers who would normally be unable to find summer jobs and who certainly needed a boost in their careers. They wanted, in particular, to help young people aged 15 - 20 who might have dropped out of school or who were having difficulties 'selling' themselves to potential employers and who were struggling under the imposition of the 'downtown kids' stereotype. We, of course, wanted to see that visible minority young people were well represented in the numbers we hired since unemployment is particularly high among visible minority youth.

No other basis of judgement should be acceptable to people who truly seek a society where there is equality of opportunity for all.

What unites every single Ontarian, whatever their colour, whatever their sex, whatever their cultural origin, whatever handicap they may or may not have, is the common bond of citizenship and the responsibilities that citizenship implies.

I happen to believe that the Canadian experience is something very special. I happen to believe that whether one is of Hungarian or German or Italian or Jewish or Chinese or East Asian or West Indian background, sustaining that background in Canada means something different from sustaining that background in any other country.

Pluralism, tolerance, diversity and understanding are not burdens upon the shoulders of this country nor upon the shoulders of Canadians. They are part of what being a Canadian is all about.

The future is ours to build. But it will take the collective effort of *all* the people of Ontario to make that future a reality. Their colour, ethnic origin, sex, couldn't matter in the least. Their will to serve this country and be part of its future couldn't matter more.

The project was carried out under the auspices of the Ontario Youth Secretariat, who paid the young people's salaries. This meant that employers received free labour in return for their careful supervision and encouragement of the young people working within their organizations.

Early in 1982, the division heard that the Ontario Youth Secretariat, pleased with the success of 1981, had more than doubled the program. We now had the responsibility of administering a summer program for 100 youth, both in Regent Park and in the Jane-Finch area. We also had the task of finding 100 suitable placements for these young people. In order to be most effective, the division set up two consultative committees, one for each area, and asked key community leaders, agency representatives and members of business groups to sit on them. With able advice coming from people knowledgeable about the areas, the division was able to select young people who would benefit most from the program, and to make contact with employers who were particularly interested in participating in this type of a project.

One other aspect of the program that was unique was the 'Friday' sessions. Employers agreed to release their young workers at noon on Fridays so that they could meet together in small groups at the project headquarters to discuss the events of the week, both positive and negative, and to participate in special career-related programs to assist them in making good personal choices for their futures. They were also informed of where to go for continuing advice.

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Affirmation/Published quarterly by:
The Ontario Human Rights Commission

Editorial Office
c/o Ontario Human Rights Commission,
Queen's Park,
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A2

ISSN 0228-5800

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Editorials

A dilemma

A survey of the commission's files shows that some complaints of racial discrimination are exceedingly difficult to sustain. That is the case not because there is an absence or a paucity of such discrimination — quite the contrary. The commission feels very keenly that such discrimination remains widespread in many areas of employment, as well as (to a lesser degree) in accommodation and the delivery of services. Discrimination is built into the system and supported by long standing patterns of behaviour.

But knowing that this type of discrimination is widespread and proving it in an individual case are two different things. An individual complaint is, so to speak, a boil on society's body politic, but tracing the boil to an endemic disease is frequently very difficult, if not im-

possible. In an individual case, the respondent may have used subtle and covert means of discrimination removed from the reach of legal proof. While individual cases do provide a pattern, the Code deals primarily with the rights of individuals and does not primarily address itself to systemic conditions. Here, the commission must resort to education and co-operative ventures which, while having aspects of affirmative action, nonetheless lack its specific framework. This is another way of saying that although actions on individual complaints may satisfy (or often, fail to satisfy) the needs of justice, they do not touch the very core of the problem of racial discrimination. Still, there has been progress. Decisions by boards of inquiry have established important precedents and thereby have lessened certain forms of discrimination. But there is an area of social behaviour which is affected only by long-term programs of education.

OHRC mourns loss of new commissioner

The Ontario Human Rights Commission expresses its deepest sympathy and sense of loss to the family of Dr. Leonidas Polymenakos, who died in Toronto on July 22 at the age of 73.

Dr. Polymenakos also served on the Ontario Advisory Council on Multiculturalism, and was a member of the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism until his death. He was appointed to the Ontario Human Rights Commission in May 1982, and on July 1, in tribute to his rich and varied contribution to Canadian life, he was awarded the Order of Canada.

He was born in Sparta, Greece in 1910 and graduated in medicine from the University of Athens in 1931.

After distinguished war service in Greece during World War II, Dr. Polymenakos came to Canada in 1945 as director of the Greek War

Relief Commission for North America, and eventually set up his medical practice in Toronto.

He was appointed honorary vice-consul for Greece in Toronto in 1961 and was largely responsible for the construction of the Hellenic Cultural Centre and San Dimitrios Greek Orthodox Church.

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While his time as a commissioner was tragically brief, the commission shares the community's deep sorrow, and mourns his passing.

A respondent's response

A 19-year-old female who worked in a restaurant complained that she had been subjected to sexual insults and advances from four male co-workers and the chef. She was also singled out, she alleged, by having references made to her Italian ancestry.

The allegations were denied by the chef and the co-workers, but the investigation revealed that while the employer had no direct knowledge of the events, they did occur. Subsequently, the matter was settled and the owners wrote a letter to all employees stating:

'It is the policy of this establishment that there be no discrimination in matters of employment on the basis of race, creed, colour, sex, age, marital status, nationality, ancestry or place of origin. This company operates under the principles set out in the

Ontario Human Rights Code, which also prohibits sexual harassment.

'All employees are expected to abide by these provisions. Any employee who is in violation of these provisions will find himself/herself subject to disciplinary procedures.

'This notice is being distributed to you with your pay cheque, so that all employees will be aware of management's serious commitment to maintaining the principles of human rights in conducting our business.'

In a letter to the Human Rights Commission, the owners further stated that they were preparing discussions at staff meetings which would further strengthen the commitment to uphold the Code, and thus contribute to the furtherance of education in human rights amongst their employees.

Chairman's corner

It is with great pleasure that I address you via a new, regular feature in *Affirmation* — the 'Chairman's Corner'. I am looking forward to using this space as a forum for an exchange of ideas and a sharing of concerns and issues arising within the area of human rights and from the new Code.

We are entering a new, exciting and challenging era of human rights in Ontario, reflected by the proclamation of our new Code in June, with its extended grounds of protection.

I would like to focus on one of the prime new areas of protection. The handicapped face discrimination and attitudinal barriers in society. The new *Human Rights Code* prohibits discrimination against both the physically and developmentally handicapped. The word 'handicapped' has a lot of different meanings, but 'incapable' is not one of them. The handicapped want to participate, and are capable of participating in almost all activities, and of doing most jobs. Most handicapped people require no or minimal-cost adaptations in the workplace in order to work effectively at a job. Often, this means merely getting a braille typewriter, a telephone voice booster for the hearing impaired, a dictaphone for the blind typist or propping a desk up a few inches to allow a person in a wheelchair to work comfortably.

I do not suggest that you hire the handicapped out of good will or hire those who are unqualified for the job. It makes good sense, however, to hire a handicapped person who is qualified and who has the motivation to prove he or she can contribute to your company. Du Pont in the United States and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce have both conducted extensive studies which show that handicapped employees rank equal to or better than non-disabled em-

ployees in: production quantity and quality, attendance, safety records, length of stay with a company and interpersonal working relationships. Many handicapped people are currently working successfully in a wide variety of jobs. It is the desire of disabled people to become taxpayers rather than tax burdens.

Only by pulling together and co-ordinating all of our resources can we effectively and optimally celebrate and fulfil the mandate of the *Human Rights Code* with regard to not only the handicapped, but to all people protected by the Code who are subjected to discrimination.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission is truly that — a commission which represents all the people of Ontario, and which has offices in every major centre of the province. Since assuming the role of chairman, I have had the pleasure of speaking to a diversity of gatherings in Toronto, London, Windsor, Kitchener, Ottawa, Hamilton and St. Catharines and would welcome many further opportunities and invitations to continue this work.

Those of you who have laboured so hard and vigorously for the cause of human rights, I thank sincerely for your efforts, and I extend our resources and assistance to those who wish to increase their understanding and appreciation of their own rights and the rights of their fellow citizens.

Borden C. Purcell, *Chairman*
Ontario Human Rights Commission

Working together

The Race Relations Division of the Ontario Human Rights Commission hosted an Open House on May 6th at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education to launch its strategy for race relations in Ontario. Distinguished members of the Race Relations panel included members of the Cabinet Committee on Race Relations, Chairman of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, Canon Borden C. Purcell, Race Relations Commissioner for the Province of Ontario, Dr. Bhauasheeb Ubale and Commissioner for the Race Relations Division, Ms. Beverley Salmon, who emceed the occasion.

The Honourable Russell H. Ramsay referred to an old Gary Lauten's column (an open letter to his children on Canada's birthday) which praised the glorious spirit and qualities of this great young country — a message, said Ramsay, for us all to remember when problems of discrimination and bigotry seem insoluble.

Canon Purcell applauded the achievements of the Race Relations Division stating that the 80s will present tremendous challenges, and that the 'Commission and Race Relations Division must work harder than ever to educate the public regarding human rights.'

The Honourable Roy McMurtry, chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Race Relations, told a capacity audience that he was immensely encouraged by what he felt was the largest gathering of community leaders committed to the area of race

relations, stating that 'we are going to make significant progress in the area if we, here tonight, make a commitment to motivate the community.' Dr. Ubale spoke of the 'tendency to treat race relations as a unique problem that must be dealt with independently,' but warned that it was 'imperative that race relations be treated as an integral part of social policy planning.'

The division's strategy is to promote racial harmony and to remove racial disadvantage through massive social education at the community and institutional levels. One primary goal is to assist every institutional sector of our society to develop its own internal capacity to deal with problems of racism and racial discrimination. According to Dr. Ubale, 'an important consideration in our strategy is to develop ways and means to draw on the enormous amount of good will in our society in order to create racial harmony.'

To reinforce its strategy, the Race Relations Division premiered a mini-documentary film entitled, 'Working Together', which describes the policies, priorities and programs of the Race Relations Division.

Based on the overwhelming turnout of approximately 700 people, and requests for copies of its strategy paper and film, the Race Relations Division feels encouraged that its philosophy of 'Working Together' is working.

*Free distribution of the film is now available through City Films Distribution Ltd.: (416) 869-1633.

Chinese Canadians and Human Rights

by Rose Lee

The formation of the Chinese Canadian National Council (CCNC) in April 1980 marked significant progress in Chinese Canadians' endeavours to promote equality and racial harmony. The CCNC is the first national organization of Chinese Canadians which is dedicated to the advocacy of human rights and the promotion of Chinese Canadians' participation in public affairs as well as to the facilitating of intercultural understanding and co-operation. Across Canada, the CCNC has 16 local chapters and affiliates, six of which are located in the province of Ontario, namely, Guelph, Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Toronto and Windsor.

The council consults and co-operates with major Chinese Canadian organizations in Ontario. For example, it presented a joint submission on Bill 7 with the Council of Chinese Canadians in Ontario and the Chinese Canadians for Mutual Advancement in Metropolitan Toronto to the Standing Committee on Resource Development of the Ontario legislature.

Discrimination and the Economy

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of occupations. Among the factors believed to bring about the decline of social inequality, a special place is assigned to economic growth. Labour market conditions are an important determinant of equality of employment opportunity. The largest minority gains occur during periods of labour scarcity, as during the two world wars, and non-whites tend to lose ground during periods of labour surplus.

Prejudice against minorities is generally more prevalent among low-income, poorly educated and status-deprived groups, whose members tend to have a low sense of mastery over their life chances. Support for right-wing social movements is due, in large part, to the economic dissatisfaction felt among persons who are discontented with their lot, with the economic state of the country, and with prospects for the future. People are available for collective protest when they lack a secure attachment to work and community. There is a fear that foreign-born workers might displace those longer-term residents who are marginally employed.

A study of persons who supported Senator Joseph McCarthy in the early 1950s reveals that most of his backing came from small business. This occupational group lost status and influence in the post-war period, and felt cut off from the main trends of modern society. McCarthy expressed their fear and mistrust of 'bigness' — big unions and big government. Also, statistics generally tend to show a great turnover in the ranks of small business — a further indicator of economic insecurity in this sector.

At the same time, although persons with high socio-economic standing may not feel particularly threatened

In the Chinese Canadian community there has been a growing awareness of human rights issues among the educated and the young. However, those who occupy the lowest stratum in the socio-economic hierarchy, and who are most likely to fall victims to discrimination, are generally uninformed about their rights. Our observations are confirmed by the results of a survey conducted by the Council of Chinese Canadians in Ontario in the summer of 1981. Of the 128 Chinese households selected from the voters list, and the 117 Chinese in the English as a Second Language program, 72.66% and 93.18%, respectively, indicated that they had not heard of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.¹

It is thus important for the Ontario Human Rights Commission to

¹ Siukeong Lee, *Awareness and Participation*, Preliminary Report on the Survey of the Legal, Social and Electoral Awareness and Participation of Chinese Canadian Residents in Wards Six and Seven of the City of Toronto, CCCO, Toronto, pp. 30 and 43.

improve and strengthen its efforts in publicizing the Code to community groups. High priority must be given to community outreach. Materials should be made available in Chinese and other languages.

It will be a great advantage to the clientele of the Ontario Human Rights Commission if the office of the commission is easily accessible. In a large city such as Metropolitan Toronto, decentralized 'storefront' offices in various parts of the city are more desirable than its present concentration of services in an office inside an imposing building.

It is essential that the commission undertake an active monitoring program as opposed to merely responding to complaints. Periodic reviews of the practices of employment agencies, employers, landlords, educational institutions and agencies would detect discriminatory practices of which victims are often unaware.

Above all, it has always been the policy of the Chinese Canadian National Council to support an independent Ontario Human Rights Commission directly responsible to the legislature of Ontario. We believe that an independent and autonomous commission would inspire additional confidence in the people it is intended to serve.

Rose Lee is executive director of the Chinese Canadian National Council.

Racial name calling

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Prof. Cumming's decision is also worthy of note in that he ordered the establishment of a Management-Employees Race Relations Committee at Woolworth's. The purpose of the committee is two-fold: to establish communication on race relations issues and problems, and to recommend appropriate measures to the company for the elimination of racial harassment. Thus, this decision not only directs compensation for the injured employee, but addresses itself in a very creative way to the larger issue of how to deal with racial problems in the workplace.

Youth Employment

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Comments on the program from the young people at the end of the summer were: 'I learned how to work with people'; 'I got a lot of confidence'; 'I gained experience'; 'I love my job'; 'I learned how to control myself.'

What the program has demonstrated clearly is that young people from these two high profile areas of Toronto: Jane-Finch and Regent Park, desperately want to work and, given a chance, will work very conscientiously, reporting to their jobs regularly and on time. They appreciate the opportunity to be treated as serious participants in the world of work and respond by giving full value for their pay.



photos: Claudio Lewis

by less powerful minorities, they may have a greater stake in existing social arrangements of privilege and exclusion. Such groups may feel that the public policy to uphold equality of opportunity could pose a threat to their own power and status. In this context, prejudice and discrimination are protective devices, operating, however short-sightedly, to preserve the integrity and dominance of the majority group.

In brief, history has shown a tendency for the insecure to press their claim for superiority and privilege over others. The hostility towards minorities evident in periods of tight economy reflects a feeling of powerlessness to affect a wide range of economic, social and personal outcomes. The fear of economic catastrophe is a historical feature of discrimination and the prejudice that underlies it. In such a climate, fundamental hatreds may displace negotiable interests in the relations between groups.

A frequent outcome of this process is opposition to equal opportunity programs, anti-discrimination legislation, unions and social relief programs. The theme of many right-wing movements is rugged individualism and self-help; and personal failings, rather than discrimination, are held responsible for social inequality.

Scapegoating of minorities and women is often central to efforts of dominant groups to reverse or stem changes that are designed to ameliorate disadvantage. Minorities make especially ideal scapegoats when they are visible and vulnerable. Identifiable groups, such as immigrants and women, are held responsible for engineering the changes, and a collective impulse develops to reinforce the status of the dominant group. It has



been documented, during the latter part of the nineteenth century in the American South, that whenever cotton prices fell on the world market, the incidence of lynching increased. Clearly, the existence of strong anti-discrimination legislation sets limits on the degree to which scapegoating activity is permitted and legitimized.

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